Etymological Notes I:
Indo-European and Nostratic

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Dedicated to the fond memory of my friend, colleague, and mentor, Hal Fleming.

ABSTRACT: In this article, I propose several new Indo-European etymologies, as well as comment on one Nostratic etymology originally suggested by Václav Blažek. Note: The Proto-Indo-European forms cited in this article are reconstructed in accordance with the glottalic model of Proto-Indo-European consonantism proposed by Gamkrelidze—Ivanov and Hopper.

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1. Hittite *pakkušš-* 'to pound, to crack, to crush, to grind'

Kloekhorst (2008:618—619) lists Hittite *pakkušš-* (vb.) 'to pound, to crack, to crush, to grind (grain)', (adj.) *pak(kuš)šuwant-* 'cracked (?)', (n.) (^{GIŠ})*pakkuššuwar* 'a wooden implement used to crack or crush cereals' (see also *Chicago Hittite Dictionary*, P, pp. 58—59; Friedrich 1991:155). Kloekhorst mentions possible etymologies suggested by Oettinger and Janda and rejects them. He concludes by stating "[f]urther unclear". Melchert (1994:330), on the other hand, cites Lydian *(we)-baq-(ẽn)-* 'to trample on' as a probable Anatolian cognate.

Now let us look at Germanic, where we find the following forms: Old English *feohtan* 'to fight, to combat, to strive; to attack, to fight against', *feoht* 'fight, battle; strife'; Old Frisian *fiuchta*, *fiochta* 'to fight'; Old Saxon *fehtan* 'to fight'; Dutch *vechten* 'to fight'; Old High German *fehtan* 'to fight, to battle, to combat' (New High German *fechten* 'to fight, to fence'), *gifeht*, *fehta* 'fight, battle, combat' (New High German *Fechten* 'fighting, fencing'); all of which can be derived from Proto-Germanic **feχtanan* 'to fight' (cf. Boutkan—Siebinga 2003:117 **fe(u)hta-*; Klein 1971:281; Kluge—Mitzka 1967:188 **fiuhtan* [instead of **fëhtan*]; Kluge—Seebold 1989:206 **feht-a-*; Kroonen 2008:134 **fehtan-* 'to fight'; Onions 1966:354—355 West Germanic **feχtan*; Orël 2003:96—97 **feχtanan*; Vercoulie 1898:309). The Germanic forms are frequently compared with Latin *pectō* 'to comb, to card'; Greek πέκω 'to comb', πεκτέω 'to shear, to clip'; etc. (cf. Rix 2001:467), but this comparison is rather problematic from a semantic point of view, and this has led several scholars to express doubts about it (cf. Kroonen 2008:134; Onions 1966:355; etc.). A better etymology is possible.

We can trace both the Hittite and West Germanic forms back to Proto-Indo-European **pʰekʷʰ-/*pʰokʷʰ-* 'to strike, to hit, to beat, to pound'. The original meaning was essentially preserved in Anatolian. For Germanic, however, we have to assume that there was a semantic shift from 'to strike, to hit, to beat, to pound' to 'to fight'. As pointed out by Buck (1949:1370—1372, no. 20.11), this is a rather common semantic development. Moreover, the phonetics do not present any problems, inasmuch as Proto-Indo-European **-kʷʰ-* > **-χ-* before **-t-* in Proto-Germanic (cf. Proto-Germanic **naχtz* 'night' [< **nokʷʰtʰs*] > Gothic *nahts* 'night'; Old Icelandic *nátt*, *nótt* 'night'; Old English *niht*, *næht*, *neaht* 'night'; Old Saxon *naht* 'night'; Old High German *naht* 'night'; etc.).

2. Armenian *katʰn* 'milk'

Armenian *katʰn* 'milk' (dialectal variants include: Sučʰava *gatʰə*; Tbilisi *kátʰə*; Łabarał, Goris, Šamaxi *kátʰnə*; Loři *katʰə*; Agulis *kaxcʰ*; Havarik *kaxs*; Areš *kaxs*; Mełri *kaxcʰ*; Karčewan *kaxcʰ*) has been compared with Greek γάλα 'milk', Latin *lac* 'milk', etc. (cf. Martirosyan 2008: 294—296 [with relevant literature]). However, trying to account the Armenian forms on the basis of their alleged Greek and Latin cognates presents almost insurmountable phonological difficulties, and the explanations put forward to try to overcome these difficulties are too convoluted to be credible (for details, see Martirosyan 2008:294—296). Yet, no convincing alternative etymology has been advanced to date.

A Proto-Indo-European nominal stem **k'ʷetʰ-u-* 'glutinous secretion, viscous discharge: gum, resin, sap' (cf. Pokorny 1959:480 **gᵘet-* 'resin') has been reconstructed on the basis of the following forms: Sanskrit *játu-* 'lac, gum'; Latin *bitūmen* 'pitch, asphalt' (borrowed from either Sabellian or Celtic); Middle Irish *beithe* 'birch-tree' (borrowed from Brittonic Celtic); Old Icelandic *kváða* 'resin'; Faroese *kváða* 'viscous fluid from a cow's teat'; Norwegian *kvaade*, *kvae* 'resin; watery fluid from a pregnant cow's udder', (dial.) *kvæde* 'birch sap'; Old English *cwidu*, *cweodo*, *cwudu* 'resin, gum; cud, mastic'; Old High German *quiti*, *kuti* 'glue'; etc. Note: The Proto-Indo-European form cited above may be from an unattested verb **k'ʷetʰ-/*k'ʷotʰ-* 'to ooze (out), to seep (our)', or something quite similar in meaning.

Derivation of Armenian *katʰn* 'milk' from Proto-Indo-European **k'ʷetʰ-u-* 'glutinous secretion, viscous discharge: gum, resin, sap' presents no major phonological difficulties, and the semantics are quite plausible in view of Faroese *kváða* 'viscous fluid from a cow's teat' and Norwegian *kvaade*, *kvae* 'resin; watery fluid from a pregnant cow's udder'. Hence, I believe that this is a far better etymology than the comparison with Greek γάλα 'milk', Latin *lac* 'milk', etc.

3. Proto-Nostratic root **ʔoy-*

In his 1999 book *Numerals. Comparative-Etymological Analysis and Their Implications*, Václav Blažek proposes a rather nice Nostratic etymology for one of the Proto-Indo-European words for the number 'one': **ʔoy-* (extended forms: **ʔoy-no-*, **ʔoy-wo-*, **ʔoy-kʰo-*). He specifically compares forms from Samoyed and Altaic (these are listed below), as well as the following Ethiopian Semitic forms (this is an expanded list) (Blažek 1999:90 and 156): Ethiopic / Geez *ʔayaya* [አየየ] 'to make equal, to even out, to be equal', *taʔayaya* [ተአየየ] 'to be equal, to be comparable, to be compared, to be paired', *ʔayāt* [አያት] 'equality, likeness, resemblance, analogy, allegory, example, conformity, harmony', *ʔayāy* [አያይ] 'equal, associate, likeness, image, appearance'; Tigre *ʔayay* 'relative, kinsman'; Amharic *ayaya* 'comrades, partners who are equal in age and status' (cf. D. Cohen 1970— :16—17 *'yy; Leslau 1987:51). In a later paper, Blažek (2012:119) also adds Dravidian forms to this etymology.

I would remove the Ethiopian Semitic forms included by Blažek and replace them with forms from Arabic and Berber, and I would also remove the Dravidian forms. Accordingly, I would rewrite and expand this etymology as follows:

Proto-Nostratic root **ʔoy-*:
(vb.) **ʔoy-* 'to be by oneself, to be alone';
(n.) **ʔoy-a* 'solitude, aloneness'; (adj.) 'single, alone; one'

A. Proto-Afrasian *ʔVy- 'single, alone; one': Proto-Semitic *ʔay-am- '(to be) single, alone' > Arabic ʔāma (root /ʔym/) 'to be without a husband or a wife (single, divorced, widowed); to lose one's wife, to become a widower; to lose one's husband, to become a widow', ʔayma 'widowhood', ʔayyim (pl. ʔayāmā) 'unmarried man or woman; widow, widower'. D. Cohen 1970— :17 *'ym; Biberstein-Kazimirski 1875.1:95—96; Steingass 1884:99—100; Wehr 1976:37; Zammit 2002:85. The following Berber forms may belong here as well, assuming development from Pre-Proto-Berber *ʔ-y-w > *y-y-w > Proto-Berber (m.) *yīw-ă̆n, (f.) *yīw-ă̆t (Prasse 1974:404) or (m.) *iyyaw-an, (f.) *iyyaw-at (Militarëv 1988:101—107), participle meaning 'being alone, sole, unique' (> 'one'): Tuareg yən (f. yət) 'one; a certain one, someone'; Siwa əǧən, iǧən (f. əǧət, iǧət) 'one'; Nefusa uǧun (f. uǧət) 'one'; Ghadames yun (f. yut) 'one'; Wargla iggən (f. iggət) 'one'; Mzab iggən (f. iggət) 'one'; Tamazight yiwən, yun (f. yiwt, yut) 'one'; Tashelhiyt / Shilha yan (f. yat) 'one'; Riff iǧ, iǧən (f. ict), iwən (f. iwət) 'one'; Kabyle yiwən (f. yiwet) 'one'; Chaoia iji (f. ijt) 'one'; Zenaga yun 'one'. Haddadou 2006—2007:224.

B. Proto-Indo-European *ʔoy- 'single, alone; one' (with non-apophonic -o-) (extended forms: *ʔoy-no-, *ʔoy-wo-, *ʔoy-kʰo-): (A) *ʔoy-no-: Latin ūnus 'one' [Old Latin oinos]; Umbrian unu 'one'; Old Irish óen, óin 'one'; Welsh un 'one'; Gothic ains 'one'; Old Icelandic einn 'one'; Faroese ein 'one'; Danish en 'one'; Norwegian ein 'one'; Old Swedish en 'one'; Old English ān 'one; alone, sole, lonely; singular, unique'; Old Frisian ān, ēn 'one'; Old Saxon ēn 'one'; Dutch een 'one'; Old High German ein 'one' (New High German ein); Albanian një 'one'; Lithuanian víenas (with unexplained initial v-) 'one; alone'; Latvian viêns 'one'; Old Prussian ains 'one'; Old Church Slavic inъ 'some(one), other'; Russian Church Slavic inokyj 'only, sole, solitary'; Russian inój [иной] 'different, other' — it is also found in Greek οἴνη, οἰνός 'roll of one (in dice)'. (B) *ʔoy-wo-: Avestan aēva- 'one'; Old Persian aiva- 'one' — it is also found in Greek οἶος 'alone, lone, lonely' (Cyprian οἶϝος). (C) *ʔoy-kʰo-: Sanskrit éka-ḥ 'one'; Mitanni ("Proto-Indic") aika- 'one'. Pokorny 1959:286 *oi-nos 'one'; Walde 1927—1932.I:101*oi-nos; Mann 1984—1987:866 *oinos, -ā 'one; unit'; Watkins 1985:45 *oi-no- and 2000:59 *oi-no- 'one, unique'; Mallory—Adams (eds.) 1997:398—399 *oi-no-s ~ *oi-u̯o-s ~ *oi-ko-s (or *h₁oi-no-s ~ *h₁oi-u̯o-s ~ *h₁oi-ko-s) and 2006:61 *h₁oi-no-s 'one'; Gamkrelidze—Ivanov 1995:741 *oi- 'one' (extended forms: *oi-no-, *oi-kʰo-, *oi-wo-); Boisacq 1950:691 and 692; Frisk 1970—1973.II:364 *oino-s and II:367 *oiu̯o-s; Chantraine 1968—1980.II:784 and II:786; Hofmann 1966:228; De Vaan 2008:642 *Hoi-no-; Walde— Hofmann 1965—1972.II:821—823; Ernout—Meillet 1979:748—749; Lindsay 1894:409; Sihler 1995:405 *oy-: *oy-no-, *oy-wo-, and possibly *oy-ko-; Matasović 2009:304—305; Kroonen 2013:11 Proto-Germanic *aina- < Proto-Indo-European *Hoi-Hn-o-; Lehmann 1986:17 *oy-no- 'sole, alone; one'; Feist 1939:24 *oi̯-no-; Falk—Torp 1903—1906.I:137, 1909:3, and 1910—1911.I:190—192; De Vries 1977:97; Onions 1966:627 Common Germanic *ainaz; Klein 1971:513 *oi-nos; Kluge—Mitzka 1967:157—158; Kluge—Seebold 1989:169 Proto-Germanic *aina-; Orël 1998:304—305 and 2003:9 Proto-Germanic *ainaz; Fraenkel 1962—1965.II:1239—1240; Smoczyński 2007.1:747—748 Proto-Baltic *ai̯-na- < Proto-Indo-European *H₁oi̯-no-; Derksen 2008:212 and 212—213 *HiH-no-; Mayrhofer 1956—1980.I:126 *oi-(ko-); Burrow 1973:248; Szemerényi 1996:222. Notes: (1) According to Kloekhorst (2008:181—182) and Puhvel (1984— .1/2:73), Hittite a-an-ki 'once' is related to the above forms. Kloekhorst derives it from Proto-Indo-European *Hoi̯onki. (2) Latin aequus 'level, equal', on the other hand, does not belong here (cf. De Vaan 2008:27).

C. Uralic: Proto-Samoyed *oj- ~ *ə̂j- 'one' > Tavgi Samoyed / Nganasan ˜o'ai 'one' (gen. ˜oadaŋ), ˜o'ałâ 'single, alone', ˜o'ałei', ˜o'adu' 'once'; Motor öjläk (?) 'one' (only in independent use). Castrén 1854:193 and 1855:45; Helimski 1997:145, 326 (no. 798) (Motor) and 1998:500, table 16.9, (Nganasan) (ŋuʔ)əiʔ ~ (ŋuʔ)əj 'one', numerical adverb (ŋuʔ)əδuʔ 'once'. Note: Not related to Proto-Samoyed *op 'one' (cf. Blažek 1999:90).

D. Altaic: Tungus: Oroch ojoke 'some, one'.

Buck 1949:13.33 alone, only (adj., adv.).

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